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NOTES
Intentions of the Conference

- To learn the in’s and out’s of the Meta Model.
- To create healthy, expanded communities.
- To build a web of Meta Model centers within our organization.
- To transform old agreements and paradigms about ways of doing “church.”

Intentions for You and Your Center

- To get the tools you need to begin building the Meta model in your own back yard.
- To increase awareness of the obstacles to growth.
- To have a specific implementation game plan with next steps and goals.
- Your team that is here is deeply connected and committed to loving one another, outrageously caring for each other and are the champions for transformation in your community.

My Intentions
Old core beliefs I discovered within me...

New ideas I choose to embody...
### Meta Zoo Diagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Meta Zoo</th>
<th>Diagram</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Structure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House Group</td>
<td>Mouse</td>
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<td>3 – 35</td>
<td><img src="V" alt="" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Church</td>
<td>Cat</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Cat Diagram" /></td>
<td>35 – 75</td>
<td><img src="G" alt="" /></td>
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<td>Medium Church</td>
<td>Lap Dog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Lap Dog Diagram" /></td>
<td>75 – 200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large Church</td>
<td>Yard Dog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Yard Dog Diagram" /></td>
<td>200 – 1,000</td>
<td><img src="G" alt="" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large Super Church</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Horse Diagram" /></td>
<td>1,000 – 3,000</td>
<td><img src="G" alt="" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>Huge Mega Church</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Elephant Diagram" /></td>
<td>3,000 – 10,000</td>
<td><img src="G" alt="" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beyond Huge Meta Church</td>
<td>Dinosaur</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Dinosaur Diagram" /></td>
<td>10,000+</td>
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Meta Model Defined

What is the Meta Church?
- A change of mind about ministry and the way it is to be done.
- A change of form in the infrastructure of the church.
- A way of doing church that allows for:
  - Unprecedented Care and Connection
  - Unlimited Growth
- A place where everyone is cared for by someone AND no one needs to give care to more than ten people.
- A church that IS small groups, not HAS small groups.

“Meta” means “change”
The Meta Model offers a change of consciousness, behavior, relationships and structure for spiritual community. With this change comes a release from limiting beliefs that can out-picture as a “struggling” community with “burned out” ministers, leaders and staff.

How do we truly move away from minister-centric churches to community or ministry-centric? What does this mean for the minister, the leaders, the members and the newcomers? For some churches, it means A LOT of change in the way we relate to each other and work together. For others, it might be a slight shift or enhancement. Wherever you are on the spectrum, the shift is transformational for all.

- The key is to develop a transition strategy that allows for a deep and profound care structure so that our congregations can continue to thrive and grow. Rather than the care of the whole community resting on the shoulders of the Minister, Practitioners and Staff, the Meta Model creates a flexible, resilient web of lay leadership that delivers high quality spiritual care and supports organic growth.

Meta model Mindsets
- Ministry occurs everywhere (not just where the minister / practitioner is)
- Empowered/Equipped lay leaders are key to church health and growth (not just a super gifted, super hard working minister)
- Leadership multiplication through apprenticing is every leader’s primary responsibility
- Developing others for ministry takes priority over doing ministry
- Co-creation replaces co-dependency as the glue that holds church relationships together
Meta globe – Basic

North Pole

Northern Hemisphere

Equatorial Mezzanine Zone

Southern Hemisphere

South Pole

Axis
“Art’s Ministry
This is where we create and care for the talent to put on the Celebration Services

Large Gatherings
(100+ people)

Two Primary Purposes:
1. Gathering Events
   - Learning
   - Practice
   - Create
2. Fishing Pond
   - Draw people into small groups

“Education Coordination”
This group decides, develops and puts on the functions in the Equatorial Zone.

Medium Size Groups
(16 – 100 people)

Small Size Groups
(3 - 15 people)

“IGNITE”
(V: Vision, H: Huddle, S: Skill Training
This is where Leaders are trained, developed and cared for.

Extra Grace Required

Very Important
Place to refer people within the church who are in crisis or need:
- 12 Steps
- Counseling / therapy groups (church counseling center)
- Grief support, etc

Large Events
- CELEBRATION
- ARTS driven (music, dance, theater, etc)
= Occur anytime, anyplace

Any event under 100

Workshops

Classes

Large Events

Extra Grace Required

Extra Grace Required

Extra Grace Required

Extra Grace Required

Extra Grace Required

Extra Grace Required

Extra Grace Required
Entrance Chart

Initial Involvement via Larger Meetings: Challenge is to find a smaller group

Initial Involvement via Small Groups
See Larger Groups as Conventions or Festivals

- Worship Service
- Size Events: Classes/Workshops
- Fishing Pond Events
- Minster Teams
- High Visibility Event
- Nurture Groups
## Meta Model Key & Terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meta Model Team</th>
<th>Meta Model Meaning</th>
<th>CSLPS’s Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meta Model</strong></td>
<td>Church Growth Model For unlimited growth &amp; outrageous support</td>
<td>Care Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Group</strong></td>
<td>Group with 3 – 15 members, Meet regularly (at least 1/month) Have a leader, a leader apprentice And an open chair</td>
<td>Sunday Service Teams, Ministries, Care Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium – Sized Gathering Group</strong></td>
<td>16 – 100</td>
<td>Fishing Pond, Classes, Mid-size Gathering Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Large Gathering</strong></td>
<td>&gt;100</td>
<td>Celebration Service, High Visibility Events</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meta Model Symbol</th>
<th>Meta Model Meaning</th>
<th>CSLPS’s Leadership Roles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ten (Leader of Ten I’s)</td>
<td>Leader (L)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xa</td>
<td>Ten (Apprentice of Ten I’s)</td>
<td>Leader in Training (LIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Fifty (Leader of Five X’s)</td>
<td>Leader Champion (LC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La</td>
<td>Fifty (Apprentice of Five X’s)</td>
<td>Leader Champion In Training (LCIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (Content, not Care)</td>
<td>100 (Gathers / Coordinates Fishing Pond Events)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca (Content, not Care)</td>
<td>100 (Apprentice of C)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>500 (Leader of ten L’s)</td>
<td>Director (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da</td>
<td>500 (Apprentice of ten L’s)</td>
<td>Director In Training (DIT)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shapes</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>🍏</td>
<td>Love/Learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stars</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
<td>Decide/Do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Squares</td>
<td>🎧</td>
<td>Mezzanine Level / Fishing Pond / Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write on Globe</td>
<td>🎈</td>
<td>Celebration Events / Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Care:** Spiritual Practice rooted in Loving Care  
**Ministry:** Service
Management Becomes Care!

This leadership structure illustrates how five LC-L huddles can care for 250 Individuals in cell groups. By adding up to five more LC-L huddles, a staff/minister (D) can carry 50 cell groups or 500 Individuals.
Small Group Leadership

Small Group Leaders

D – Staff / Director
LC – Coach / Leader Champion
L – Small Group Leader

Small Group Leaders with Leaders in Training

D – Staff / Director
LC – Coach / Leader Champion
LCIT – Coach / Leader Champion Apprentice
L – Small Group Leader
LIT – Small Group Leader Apprentice
Small Group Leader (L) & Leader (LIT) in Training

Roles & Responsibilities

This is intended to cover all small group leaders whether they are leading a Care Group, Service Team, or Ministry Group.

Qualities of a Small Group Leader & Leader in Training

- Integrity
- Effective at Listening
- Reliable
- Self-Aware
- 100% responsible for impact of actions

Responsibilities of a Small Group Leader

- Attend IGNITE!
- Meets with their LC
- Develops a Leader in Training
- Ministers to their group members
- Holds an intention for filling the “open chair” and birthing a group
- Consciously holds a space and plan for Loving, Learning, Deciding, and Doing according to the nature of the group they lead (the proportion of time spent on the four components may vary depending whether the group is a Care Group, Service Team, or Ministry Group) and is in close relationship with their LC on its design and implementation
- Causes attendance records to be taken
- Accountability & Integrity – supports members in attending meeting and keeping their word through loving conversations and recognizing when not present

Responsibilities of a Small Group Leader in Training:

- Attends IGNITE!
- Meets with their LC/LCIT
- Meets with their Leader
- Ministers to their group members
- Holds an intention for filling the “open chair” and birthing a group
- Consciously holds a space and plan for Loving, Learning, Deciding, and Doing according to the nature of the group they lead (the proportion of time spent on the four components may vary depending whether the group is a Care Group, Service Team, or Ministry Group)
- Has the intention to lead their own group
Leader Champion (LC) & Leader Champion in Training (LCIT)

Roles & Responsibilities

Ideally, a Leader champion and Leader Champion in Training has led a group, nurtured/supported a Leader in Training, has birthed a group, and then birthed again. Not usually a paid staff; D’s may be paid staff – stipend, part-time or full-time.

Qualities of a LC
- Integrity
- Effective at Listening
- Reliable
- Self-Aware
- 100% Responsible for Impact of Action

Responsibilities of a LC
- Attend IGNITE!
- Meet regularly with their Leaders (go over 5 questions) to provide care and training
- Develops a Leader Champion in Training
- Attend LC small group
- Visits Leader’s group (each group at least 2X/year) for “on the job training”
- Uses specified conflict resolution process (go to prayer first, etc…)
- Meets regularly (1X/month) one on one with their D for care, training and to update the D on the state of their group leaders and groups

Responsibilities of a LCIT
- Attend IGNITE!
- Meet regularly with their Leaders in Training (go over 5 questions) to provide care and training
- Attend LCIT small group
- Meet regularly with the Leader Champion for care and training
- Visits Leader in Training’s group (each group at least 2X/year) for “on the job training”
- Uses specified conflict resolution process (go to prayer first, etc…)
- Meets regularly (1X/month) one on one with their D for care, training and to update the D on the state of their group leaders and groups
- Has the intention to provide care and training for 3-5 leaders

6 Questions

Questions to ask your leaders every time you meet with them:
- How are you doing?
- How are you as a Leader doing?
- How is your relationship with your Leader in Training?
- How is your group?
- How is your Open Chair?
- What can I hold for you in prayer?
Director (D) & Director in Training (DIT)

Role and Responsibilities

Directors are typically ministers or spiritual counselors and may be paid staff-stipend, part-time or full time. Directors are steeped in self-care as a way of life and have a rich and robust spiritual practice that involves regular communion with the Divine. Directors have an already established circle of support that involves people where they are safe to be honest, real and vulnerable...a support circle that provides care to them. This can look like master mind groups, spiritual counseling, life coaching, financial advisor, fitness coach, health and wellness practitioners, therapists, sponsors, etc. Directors are adept at reaching out for care at resourcing themselves. Ideally, a Director has led a group, nurtured/supported a Leader in Training, has birthed a group, and then birthed again.

Responsibilities of a D

- Commitment to rich and robust spiritual practice
- Commitment to regular self-care
- Vision Caster at IGNITE, LC Meetings, etc.
- Meet regularly with their LC’s to provide care and training
- Develops a Director in Training
- Meets regularly with LC small group
- Coordinate program planning with master calendar
- Assure that Leader Champions (LC’s) are recruiting Leader Champions-in-Training (LCIT’S)
- Assure that LC’s are assisting new group birthing after Leaders-in-Training are appointed
- Assure that Leaders are developing LIT’s
- Ensure reporting of group attendance, pledging, frequency of meetings, leadership rosters, to Director of Community Development
- Mediator for challenges in groups or individuals if not resolved with Leader or Leader Champion, then it is escalated to the D
- Link LC’s to senior staff
- Plan Ignite Meetings

Responsibilities of a D-it

- Commitment to rich and robust spiritual practice
- Commitment to regular self-care
- Meets regularly with D for care and training
- Meet regularly with their LCIT’s to provide care and training
- Meets regularly with LCIT small group
- Coordinate program planning with master calendar
- Assure that Leader Champions (LC’s) are recruiting Leader Champions-in-Training (LCIT’S)
- Assure that LC’s are assisting new group birthing after Leaders-in-Training are appointed
- Assure that Leaders are developing LIT’s
- Ensure reporting of group attendance, pledging, frequency of meetings, leadership rosters, to Director of Community Development
- Link LC’s to senior staff
- Plan Ignite Meetings
- Intention to provide care and training to 3-5 LC’s
Leader and Leader in Training Development

**Leadership Community**

Skills training and ongoing supervision for cell group leaders, each of whom is expected to be developing an apprentice leader.

**Apprentice Community**

Orientation and basic skills training for apprentice leaders, who are under appointment in groups.
Small Group consists of:
- LC – Leader Champion (Ten Group Leader’s Coach/Champion, Stops by from time to time)
- L – Ten Group Leader
- LIT – Ten Group Leader in Training
- H – Host/Hostess
- B – Babysitter (optional)
- I – Group Member
- O – Open Chair
- EGR – Extra Grace Required (Referral Network – optional but expected)
Love, Learn, Decide & Do Diagram

NOTES:

- Celebrate birthdays
- Do a loving exercise (or two)
- Have prayer partners in the group and change them every month

Love

- Attend a class together
- Read the book of the month together
- Learn/discuss about the theme of the month

Learn

- Schedule all your
- Decide what service activity to do as a group
- Decide group agreements

Decide

- Volunteer as a group
- Paint a member's living room
- Visit a sick member in the hospital
- Go to a movie together

Do
Love, Learn, Decide & Do Worksheet

Do _____%  Love _____%

Decide _____%  Learn _____%
Filling the Open Chair

Have a commitment to filling the Open chair

Come up with protocol and a process for invitations and decisions:
- How do we invite?
- Who decides (Majority? Leader?)
- How do we decide?

Fill the Open chair planfully, gently.
- Filling the open chair can be destabilizing, yet, an essential part of a healthy small group that is part of the Meta Model
- If the group is primarily a Love group with a lot of intimacy and sharing, you may experience more resistance. The resistance comes from a belief in lack and limitation (*not enough love to go around, their time to share will be limited by others joining, etc.*)
- Acknowledge and talk about the resistance. Don’t allow it to sway your commitment to keep and fill an Open Chair.

Leader and LIT meet with potential new members separately before the regular meeting.

Purpose: casual meeting to make sure the person will fit into the group, understanding the requirements, is committed to belonging, and established Leader to member relationship from the beginning.
- Meet in a public place (coffee house, etc.)
- Get to know them-ask them about previous religious experience, service experience, family life, work, etc.
- Important questions-“What are you hoping to gain out of being in this group?” “Do you feel you have the time to commit?” “What challenges might you face around attendance, belonging, sharing, etc?”
- Go over group agreements and requirements
- Establish yourself as their leader (prayer, personal support, questions, etc.)

If member is approved-contact current group members (via email), prior to next meeting, letting them know a new person will be joining the group. Share that you met with them and your excitement and energy of welcome. Inform them they will be at the next meeting and invite the group to be a space of welcome.
Nine keys to Effective Small Groups

The following ideas are adapted from the book, *9 Keys to Effective Small Group Leadership*. How lay leaders can establish dynamic and healthy cells, classes, or teams, by Carl George, Kingdom Publishing, 1997.

This book is written from the evangelical perspective, but many of its principles have been useful for us in working with New Thought leadership. It may be challenging for your leaders to read the book because of the emphasis on evangelism, so we’ve taken some of George’s chapter headings and offered a quick summary of their content here.

What does a healthy partnership between minister, staff and lay leaders look like?

The lay leader will be encouraged, helped, and empowered to do the following:

**Key Number One:** connect with the larger leadership network of the Center, including the staff, so we’ll recognize we’re partners in providing member care.

This connection can take place as a large group in a bi-monthly Ignite meeting, which includes all Leaders. A smaller group of Leader Champions meets every month. These are the “leaders who support leaders.” As staff members may also be Leader Champions, the leadership core is connecting in person with staff at least once each month. Most Leader care takes place between meetings, in one-on-one or small group coaching, by the leader Champions. In addition, the Leader Champions visit the small groups of the Leaders they support a few times each year, to get a feel for what’s going on in the group from direct experience, and to help develop the leaders with feedback on what they observe.

**Key Number Two:** Recruit your Leader in Training, even before you hold your first meeting.

The principle that fuels the Meta Model is the multiplication of Leaders. The idea of every group having both a Leader and a Leader in Training not only promotes group growth, but helps prevent Leader burnout. People have often approached Leadership with an idea to start a small group, usually a Home Group or a Ministry. In the early days of building support there may not be much support available, thus resulting in many groups struggling briefly and then disbanding. It is vital to insure that the infrastructure is in place to support small groups in forming.

Leadership needs to guide those who desire to form a new small group, if the idea is in alignment with the values of the Center, that a Leader in Training and at least one other group member be identified, and then it is set into the care structure. In observations it has been found that the Leader in Training appears effortlessly, but it’s also interesting to note that some prospective Leaders really struggle with finding Leaders in Training. In fact, that struggle brings up interesting spiritual opportunities for the person looking to start a group. This has sometimes shown up as someone with a kind of reactive energy that says “Why do I need a Leader in Training? You’re putting too many rules and requirements on Leadership?” It has also showed up as a tearful; prospective Leader who says “I can’t find a Leader in Training. Why doesn’t anyone support what I want to create?” both scenarios have valuable spiritual information for the prospective Leaders.

As there is a shift to implementing the Meta Model (kind of like rebuilding the ship while sailing), there are times when it is appropriate to offer a prospective Leader an Assistant, someone with small group experience who is holding the space for the leader in Training, yet-to-be. (As Carl George says, “an Assistant will help you carry a log. An apprentice will learn how to carry the log and will eventually take it away with a helper of his or her own.”) It is also occasionally appropriate to pair prospective Leaders with others who have expressed interest in leading groups, in a kind of “arranged marriage.”
Other Centers have learned so far:

**The best predictor for a successful small group Leader is someone who has been a Leader in Training in a small group, and has been coached and developed by a Leader and a Leader Champion.**

There are, of course, exceptions to this - the kind of person who enters the community with a wonderful consciousness and highly developed leadership skills, (for example, a Practitioner who has served in another Center and moved to this area.) But usually things work best when a small group Leader personally invites a Leader in Training and works to develop her/him as a leader.

**Key Number Three: Hold the consciousness of small group growth with the Open Chair at every meeting. Invite newcomers!**

At every, meeting, an empty chair is placed in the circle, holding the consciousness for a new member(s) to join the group. The empty chair is a visual reminder of the welcoming space the group holds for new members, and the leader regularly asks the group “is there someone that any of us knows with whom we’d like to share this experience we’re having?” different groups will have different preferences for inviting new people to visit and join. That’s absolutely fine- as long as the intention of the group is to be looking for others to include in this experience of spiritual community.

**Key Number Four: Prepare for every meeting with prayer and involve your Leader in Training.**

Spiritual practice is the fundamental work that every Leader does in preparation for her/his service. Including the Leader in Training in regular prayer and visioning for the group creates a beautiful foundation of consciousness for what unfolds in the group meeting. Most Leaders and Leaders in Training connect once a week by phone and hold the members of their group in prayer. Each Leader and Leader in Training is also connecting weekly with his/her Leader Champion, and receiving prayer support in addition to coaching.

**Key Number Five: Good boundaries and clear agreements create a safe container for the small group meeting.**

Generally Home Groups meet on the same night/day each month, and have an understanding with group members about attendance. Attendance agreements vary from group to group, as do procedures for inviting guests to sit in on the Circle or be included as new members. Some variance in agreements is expected, but the important point is that group agreements are clear, and it’s expected that everyone honor them, starting with the Leader. This includes starting on time, ending on time, and any other agreements that the group has to structure its meetings. Most Home Groups open with prayer and spiritual practice, then read a set of “guidelines for Sharing” before the topic of the month is discussed. The care of the group is entrusted to the Leader and leader in Training, so if they recognize something taking place that doesn’t honor group agreements, they need to speak to it. Leader Champions can provide coaching around ways to address issues ranging from inconsistent attendance to disruptive participation in meetings.

**Key Number Six: Come as a small group to the Sunday celebration, or other events at the Center.** Home Groups, Ministries, and Service Teams that will sit together in Sunday Service from time to time, or attend events as a group, feel connected as a small group within the larger community.
Key Number Seven: Teach people how to give to and serve each other as well as those outside the group.

The essence of small group life in spiritual community is genuine interest and participation in the lives of fellow group members. In addition to sharing spiritual practice and prayer partnership, Home Groups might help Circle members with babysitting home remodeling, providing meals during a medical convalescence, and even creating a benefit event for the member or their family in times of special needs. This is the essence of spiritual community- to know one another, care for one another’s needs, and actively participate in one another’s spiritual development.

Key Number Eight: Bring new people to the Center by encouraging your small group members to invite friends and neighbors to attend open small group meeting, mezzanine level events and classes, or the Sunday celebration service.

There are so many ways to participate in the spiritual life of a community. Not everyone responds to a larger celebration service, or has the ability or desire to be part of a class. The small group may be the ideal way of introducing people to your spiritual community. It may be that having formed relationships in a small group will facilitate them sharing a larger group experience. It’s much less overwhelming to attend a large group event of you know there will be a few people you already know. Also, the vibration that’s created on the small group level by people doing spiritual practice together mat whet the appetite of someone who is new to spiritual community for more study.

Key Number Nine: (Which is really Key Number One!) Creation begins in consciousness. Connection begins in consciousness. Leadership begins in consciousness.

Thinking of small group leadership as spiritual care- of knowing the truth of the wholeness, abundance, grace, and goodness of every group member- is a perspective that resonates at the heart of New Thought spiritual community. “The truth of every relationship is Oneness” and “There is a spiritual solution to every apparent problem” are enormously inspiring and relieving spiritual principles for Leaders to remember in group life. Equipping leaders with skills in facilitation or suggesting systems for order is less critical than helping them to anchor in spiritual principle and practice. The joy of spirit-centered Leadership is co-creation- not just a collaboration of leadership in community, but true sense of partnership with the Divine.
Identifying YOUR Social Architecture

1. Fill out the Small Group Worksheet, identifying all groups that currently meet as part of your community. In order for a gathering to be considered as a “group” it must:
   a. Have at least three (3) regular attendees
   b. Meets at least once a month

2. Differentiate groups based on SIZE:
   a. 3 – 15
   b. 16 – 100
   c. >100

3. Differentiate groups based on FUNCTION:
   a. Primarily “Love/Learn”
   b. Primarily “Decide/Do”

4. Differentiate groups based on OPEN or CLOSED:
   a. Is the group OPEN to receiving new members (do they have an open chair?)
   b. Is the group CLOSED to receiving new members

5. Identify the group Leader (L).

6. Identify the group Leader in Training (LIT)

7. Create a “post-it” for each group based on the above differentiation:
   a. Circles/Apples: small group whose primary function is to “Love/Learn”
   b. Stars: small group whose primary function is to “Decide/Do”
   c. Squares: Mezzanine/Equatorial level Fishing Pond, class, medium-sized group/gathering
   d. Write directly on map: Celebration Events & Services

8. Write the Name and/or Short Description of the group on the post-it.
   a. (e.g. Care Group, Animal Ministry, House band, Core Council)

9. Write the L and LIT name on the post-it.
   a. (If there is no L or LIT, write L and LIT on post-it and leave blank)

10. Place the post-it on the Meta Globe in the zone that it represents or supports.
    a. Place groups and events that are part of your care structure ON the globe, and those not currently part of the care structure on the periphery.
# Small Group Worksheet - Mapping

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Meta Globe & Mapping

**Leadership Council**

- Think beyond Sundays
- Can occur any night
- Shake up the “Sunday” thing; get your Center out of just on Sundays

**Art’s Ministry**
This is where we Create, nurture and care for the talent to put on the Celebration Services.

**Large Events**
- CELEBRATION
- Arts driven (music, dance, theater, etc)
- Occur anytime, anyplace

**Large Gatherings**
(100+ people)

**Education Coordination**
This group decides, develops and puts on the functions in the Equatorial Zone.

**Any event under 100**

**Workshops**
**Classes**

**Two Primary Purposes:**
1. Gathering Events
   a. Learning
   b. Practice
   c. Create
2. Fishing Pond
   a. Draw people into small groups

**Medium Size Groups**
(16-100 people)

**Small Size Groups**
(3-15 people)

**“IGNITE”**
(V: Vision, H: Huddle, S: Skill Training)
This is where Leaders are trained, developed and cared for.

- Meet with some level of frequency
- Connected to the supported system of the Center
- Has an “L”
- Shows up for leadership meetings

**Extra Grace Required**

**Note:**
In mapping your center, put the groups that are not currently part of your Care Structure on the outside of the globe.

**Very Important:**
Place to refer people within the center who are in crisis or need:
- 12 Steps
- Counseling/therapy groups (church counseling center)
- Grief support, etc.
IGNITE! Defined

An infusion of love, inspiration, practice and education for CSLPS Leaders

This is the monthly gathering where Leaders are trained, developed and cared for. The Core elements of this gathering are:

VHS (V: Vision, H: Huddle, S: Skill Training)

Vision – Senior minister takes time to share the vision of the community, and even more…what is going on for them? What has them on THEIR edge? It’s a time for the leaders to get up close and personal. What book is turning them on and why? Further, why is it relevant to their center and their spiritual growth.

Huddle – Leaders meet with their Leader Champions. They “huddle” to connect, share how it’s going. Ideally, this is the time when they meet once a month so they don’t have to schedule it for another time. All leaders being supported by one Leader Champion get to know each other, connect, and share resources, solutions, ideas, etc. this is the LC’s “small group” meeting. LLDD happens in huddle.

Skill training – Leadership training. Listening skills, prayer work, loving exercises, how to fill the open chair, how to birth…and on and on. Anything the leaders need to feel outrageously supported and empowered.

NOTES:
Birthing Explained

What is Birthing?

Birthing is the natural means by which a small group reproduces itself. Birthing occurs when a Leader in Training has been trained, the group has grown to about 10-12 (no more than 12) regular participants and has been together for about 12-24 meetings. When birthing occurs what has been one group is now two groups.

Why Birthing Doesn’t Happen, or Doesn’t Go Well

Collective unconscious collusion to NOT grow-
Most people like the intimacy of their small group and have the belief that if new people are added the safety and intimacy will be diluted. In actuality if new people are not added the group eventually stagnates and dies.

Endings & Beginnings

Once new people are added to a group people face a second hurdle around birthing which is the pain and grief of saying goodbye to members of the group who move on to start another group. This grief must be honored by giving the group time to feel its feelings fully and express them completely. Also, the birthing process needs to be talked about and planned over time so that it is not sudden and shocking to the people.

Rituals to Honor the Endings in Birthing

Rituals include speaking words of appreciation to one another, making sure that all conflicts are resolved and completed, giving gifts that invite celebration and remembrance.

Various Ways to birth (see diagrams for what this might look like):

X leaves to form new group
Xa leaves to form new group
Leadership Nucleus leaves to form new group
Turbo Group: X starts a group with all Xa’s and after 12-18 meetings all Xa’s leave to become Xs to start their own group.

And Remember...
If a group has 12-15 and has a Leader in Training (LIT) –the group is “pregnant”
If a group has 12-15 and NO LIT – it’s just overweight!
Birthing Possibilities

Group Leader (L) leaves group to start a New Group, LIT becomes the L and an "I" becomes the LIT.

Three new people are brought into leadership.
Leader in Training (LIT) leaves group to start a New Group, LIT becomes the L and an “I” becomes the LIT.

Three new people are brought into leadership.
Leadership Nucleus forms (L – LIT) and the leadership Nucleus leaves with several Individuals (I) to start a new group.

In Mother Group LIT becomes L and a “I” becomes a LIT.

This opens up for new “I’s” to join both groups.
On Boarding CSLPS Leader Champions

A Leader Champion is an active, registered member of the CSLPS. They demonstrate strong leadership skills, mature consciousness, creative input, has active and flourishing prayer partnerships, and generously contributes financially to CSLPS in recognizable ways. Additionally this person has completed Foundations and has experienced leading small groups.

This person is willing to be outrageously cared for and to pass on this love and care to the leaders they are serving.

This person is dedicated to supporting their leaders to become exceptional in:
- Being outrageously loved, cared for and supported personally and as a leader
- Leading monthly meetings (L,L,D,D)
- Ministering to the members of their small group
- Mentoring and developing their LIT
- Leading the team in filling the open chair
- Assisting Leaders in successfully on-boarding new small group members
- Move the group into fruitful birthing and expansion

Commitments
Below is a list of meetings that are considered the lifeline of CSLPS’s leadership care, expansion, and development/

Monthly LC Meeting for Ds and LCs
- 3rd Tuesday of each month
- 6:30-8:30pm

Monthly Ignite Meeting for all CSLPS leaders, lead apprentice, LCs and Ds
- 1st Sunday of the Month
- 1pm- 4pm

This meeting follows a V.H.S. (vision, Huddle, Skill Training) format. Dr. Michael shares the vision, there is a skill training component designed to equip leaders with the tools they need to succeed, and then the LCs huddle with their leaders and small groups to connect and support each other.

Weekly prayer meeting with your D can take place in person or on the phone or arranged contact. These meetings are set according to your time and schedule. They are a place to briefly share your experience as a Spiritual leader and receive prayer support. The format they follow is as follows:

Prayer Call Questions:
How are you?
How are you as a leader?
How is your apprentice?
How is your open chair?
How can I support you in prayer?

Supporting new leaders
Leader Champion’s main charge is to support and groom leaders. A leader Champion also supports an LC apprentice.
7 Easy Steps for Leaders to Welcome New People to your Group

When a new person expresses interest in joining your group, either to you directly or through CSLPS, please take these steps to assure outrageous support in making them feel welcomed, appreciated, and excited to belong and share their gifts and talents. These steps are created to support you in being successful. If you have other practices that are working well for you please take the time to share them with us, so we can share them with the other leaders.

1. **Call** them within 48 hours. It is important to connect with them sooner than later so the interest does not turn cold.
2. Upon your first call, be sure to make time for it so you can find out who they are personally, what draws them to your group. Discover some fun tid-bits about them and what talents they have – and be sure to share about yourself. Find some common ground and enjoy it! This makes them feel welcomed and connected before they officially begin.
3. Email your group to acknowledge the new person so that everyone can be a part of the joy and excitement.
4. Make sure the new person has on their calendar when and where the next ALL team meeting is. Do something special to acknowledge and introduce them to the entire team at their first meeting. This can be as simple as taking the time for everyone to share something about themselves, not just the new person, so everyone gets more connected, loved and cared for.
5. If you are a Sunday service group, make sure the new volunteer knows what time, where, and who to report to for their first experience of serving. If you cannot be there to greet them, make sure whoever is leading does this. Assign them to shadow someone that you know is fun, well-versed in what has to happen, and will guarantee an amazing first-time experience.
6. Be sure to call them after their first meeting or Sunday of service to check in around their experience.
7. Assign them a buddy on the team to pray and check in with (if available).
Transitioning CSLPS Leaders: Parting Ways

When a leader/group member decides that they’d like to move on to a new Ministry or small group at CSLPS, here are some guidelines to help facilitate the transition. Remember volunteers who are not serving in their joy, are not serving anyone. CSLPS’s goal is to have all volunteers fully ignited, in their genius and connected to a nurturing and supportive small group.

When caring for a small group it is important to be mindful of the transitioning member’s experience as well as that of the remaining members. It is best to be transparent with all information to avoid gossip or confusion. Remember they are still in your care until they land in a new group.

Transitioning a leader/member to a new role
1. Listen to their desires with an open heart, this is not personal, be prayerful. If this is not the right role for them, make a few suggestions about where they might be more in their genius
2. Thank them for their service and help to connect or introduce the member to the new lead if applicable/
3. Let our LC or D know about the transition.
4. Create a group gathering to allow the entire group to thank them for being a team member and set an intention for their new role. E.G. I wish you continued joy and wonderful creative expression as you new role in CSLPS.
5. If the group is unable to meet in this way, acknowledge the member with a thank you note signed by the group or some other way of recognizing their time spent with the group.

Conscious Communication Prior to Parting Ways
Before asking a lead or member to transition from leadership, be sure to engage in conscious and direct communication. When a lead/team member is experiencing conflict or inability to meet agreements the first place we ask you as their leader is to take the issue to prayer.
1. Invite the lead/member to be prayerful about the group agreements. Ask them if this role is really a ‘full body yes’ for them. Let them know that you will be prayerful as well and ask in Spirit what is there for each of you to know in order to stand on common ground.
2. Set a time to meet. Let them know that you are interested in finding common ground. Review agreements with the member/lead. Ask if they are able to sincerely commit to group agreements. Give them a clear time frame to make said adjustments. Let them know you are available to support them in reaching this intention.
3. If the issue continues, invite the leader/member to participate in a practitioner session. If you need assistance in connecting with a practitioner, reach out to your LC or D.
4. If common ground is still not reached let the leader/member know that for the benefit of the group, they are being asked to part ways.
5. If possible create a group gathering to allow the entire group to thank them for being a team member and set an intention for their continued spiritual growth.

For the Leader Champion
1. Lean into your Care structure. Your LC or D should be informed every step of the way.
2. Direct communication means in person or by phone. Emails and text are not appropriate forms of direct communication. Too much can be misinterpreted. It is best to use emails and texts for giving information or praise as these forms tend to magnify the meaning of words. Please do your best to handle all critical feedback with care, prayer and in person.
3. During this time of parting ways be extra vigilant about your own care. Make sure that you are doing your Spiritual practice and getting prayer support.
12 Steps for Meta-izing Your Community

1. **Master the Meta Mindset.**

2. **Identify and let go of limiting beliefs** about ministry and ministers.

3. **Work with a team to map your community:** Current and Future state – Identify all current and small groups, all mid-sized and large gatherings, entrance points. Place groups and events that are part of your care structure **ON** the globe, and those not currently part of the care structure on the periphery.

4. **Set goals and plans for moving from current to future reality!**

5. **Assess the balance of Loving, Learning, Deciding and Doing** in your various groups and add missing elements to each group as needed.

6. **Cast a vision and communicate with key stakeholders** about the Meta Model Growth & Care Structure.

7. **Start a “turbo” small group:** a turbo small group is a group of all “Leaders in Training” that meets for a limited time (8 weeks) and then births starting a whole new set of groups each with a Leader and a Leader in Training.

8. **Identify, recruit, and train a Leader in Training for all groups.**

9. **Put the open chair in all meeting/groups** and start a conversation about the power of personal invitation in each group.

10. **Start “Ignite” meetings** to support and empower your leaders.

11. **Join the CSLPS Meta Outrageous Care support system.**

12. **Be patient and gentle with yourself and others.**
Experiencing the Meta Model in Your Center

**Goals for the Next 3, 6, 9 months**
Implementing the Meta Model is NOT about overlaying a new structure over your existing structure. It is a new way of BEING and DOING church. As you shift your old beliefs to the Meta Mindsets, and embrace empowered leadership over a minister who “does it all,” you begin to see the possibility of new life and vitality emerges within your leadership team and your community.

You begin to see that EVERY way the members of your center come together IS small groups – an opportunity for Loving, Learning, Deciding and Doing.

**Month One**
Consciousness First!

**Month Two**
Action Follows Consciousness

**Month Three**
All We Need Is Love....Love, Love

**Month Four**
Turbo Charged

**Month Five**
We’re Really Revin’ Now!

**Month Six**
Hump Month – You have made it through ½ a year!

**Month Seven**
Roots Grown Deep

**Month Eight**
‘Sup? How’s it Goin’?

**Month Nine**
You are Pregnant with Potentiality, and nearly due to deliver!
Month One
Consciousness First! / Laying the Foundation

- Breathe a lot
- FEEL excited – don’t talk to everyone about it, generate excitement within
- Pray – weekly prayer call with those who attended conference
- Master the Meta Mindsets
- Connect with your MetaMind Group 1-2x during the month
- Read through your materials 3 x’s
- Read “Prepare Your Church for the Future” by Carl George
- Form Your Meta Group
  o Consciousness work
  o Loving (lots)
  o DO – continue to map your community and your care structure
- Begin to plan your first Ignite Gathering

Consciousness First! – Master the Meta Mindsets

- BE Outrageous Care!
- Developing others for ministry takes priority over doing ministry
- Ministry occurs everywhere (not just where the minister/practitioner is)
- Empowered/Equipped lay leaders are key to church health and growth (not just a super gifted, super hard working minister)
- Leadership multiplication through apprenticing is every leader’s primary responsibility

What Old Beliefs have been limiting our growth and our ability to provide outrageous care WITHOUT burnout of minister or leaders?

Minister:

Leaders:

Members:

What support will I receive to Release these old beliefs?

Minister:

Leaders:

Members:

How will we add more LOVE to all our gatherings?
**Forming Our Core Meta-Group!**
It is key to have a core group of folks who understand the idea of CARE structure, instead of top-down organizational structure. This group should include those who attended the conference, plus a SMALL group of key leaders who can help you look at the big picture and begin to plan ways to allow this new model to emerge in your center.

1. Meet with your Core Meta Group
   a. Map Your globe
   b. What entrance points do you currently have (small, medium, large)
   c. What groups currently exist – within your care structure, and outside it?
   d. Which groups have leaders and leader apprentices? (see worksheet)
2. Define your CARE structure (see worksheets.) Map out two things:
   a. How is your organization currently structured? (Who supports whom, is responsible for or accountable to whom?)
   b. How you’d like the flow to be – who supports whom?
   c. Any leakage (where people currently are going to someone outside their care line for support, guidance, direction.)

*Begin planning your first IGNITE! Leadership Gathering*
Plan to bring together a group of leaders for an evening of food, fellowship, L,L,D,D/VHS-vision of the model in the community, brief overview of what it is, huddle with others, learn some skills

**Key: this must be promoted as MUCH MORE than a “meeting”!**

**Vision:** It is an opportunity to be in the “field” of Vision with the Spiritual Leader-to rest in the highest idea of what is emerging in your center.

What aspect of the Vision will be cast this evening?

**Huddle:** It is an opportunity to “huddle” together with people they work/play with at the center (service teams, practitioners, hospitality, teachers, etc.)

Who will you bring together to share ideas, information and love?

**Skill-building:** It is an opportunity to receive support in their life and in their sacred service within the center-some sort of skill that will empower them as a leader in all areas of their life.

What skill will you empower your leaders with?

**Other items** you want to share at this gathering:

**REMEMBER** – this is NOT an opportunity for you to just dump your excitement of the “New Model” all over your leaders – they will glaze over and not FEEL the essence of what is possible. **BE the Model**-share LOVE, LEARN, DECIDE & DO – by Being and Doing these things – not teaching them!
Month Two
Action Follows Consciousness
- Core Meta Group meets bi-weekly to continue mapping your social architecture (globe) and your care structure
- Host your first Ignite! Gathering
- Begin implementing L, L, D, D in all your key meetings/gatherings
- Connect with your Meta Mind Group 1-2x during the month

Month Three
All We need Is Love…. Love, Love
- Core Meta Group continues meeting bi-weekly
- Loving exercise yourself to overload
- Do Loving exercises at your gatherings
- Begin planning a 4-6 week Turbo Group agenda, timing and materials (see sample agenda)
- Create a personal invitation list for your Turbo Group and begin to promote Turbo group if you choose to invite others in your community

Month Four
Turbo Charged
- Minister speaks about the essence of the model during 4 Sunday services
- Sermons on the consciousness piece behind the model
- Cast the vision, stir the pot, get people excited about it
- Launch your first Turbo Group: 4-6 week training/modeling for new leaders
- Core Meta Group continues to meet bi-weekly and also debrief after each Turbo Group session
- Participate in Quarterly Meta Model Support Call
- Connect with your Meta Mind Group 1-2x during the month

Month Five
We’re Really Revin’ Now
- Core meta Group continues meeting bi-weekly
- Complete your Turbo Group: 4-6 week training/modeling for new leaders
- Debrief Turbo Groups for new leaders – identify key leaders and groups you want to form with your new leaders
- Pick 2-5 new groups that will form for the next term (from Turbo Group participants)
- Meet with key leaders that emerged from Turbo Group
- Attend Meta Model gatherings at Bodhi and/or CSL gatherings
- Connect with your Meta Mind Group 1-2x during the month

Month Six
Hump Month – You have made it through ½ a year!
- Celebrate!
- Core Meta Group continues meeting bi-weekly
- Host your second Ignite! Gathering – setting the stage for monthly leadership gatherings
- Set a plan on how LLDD is enhanced in your existing groups and teams
- Connect with your Meta Mind Group 1-2x during the month
Month Seven
Roots Grown Deep
- Participate in Quarterly Meta Model Support Call
- Core Meta Group continue meeting bi-weekly
- Revisit your social architecture, your entrance pathways, your various types of groups
- Revisit your care structure – do you have leaders and leaders-in-training for all your groups?
  What support is happening? What leakage is occurring?
- Host Ignite! Gathering

Month Eight
‘Sup? How’s it Goin’?
- Core meta Group continues meeting bi-weekly
- Host Ignite! Gathering
- Connect with your MetaMind Group 1-2x during the month
- Where is Care really rocking’ and Love truly happening?
- What seems to be missing? Where are you not experiencing outrageous care or some level of burnout? (minister/leaders)

Month Nine
You are Pregnant with Potentiality, and nearly due to deliver!
- You may want to do another 4-6 week Turbo Group or some kind of leadership training
## Small Group Worksheet

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***Group is pregnant, start taking steps to birth new group. See your Leader Champion for Support***
Leader Champion Worksheet

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***You are pregnant, start taking steps to empower your Leader Champion Apprentice to take over.
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Map Your Care Structure Tree:
Identify Your D & DIT, LC’s & LCIT’s, L’s & LIT’s
Also identify any drainage (L’s going directly to D for support or D’s going directly to L to support and manage). Do this by drawing a line between the relationships.
Turbo Group

**A Turbo Group is a great way to start small groups.**
L begins group with all LIT’s who are committed to being leaders after the initiation/training period. The group meets for 12-18 sessions and focuses on being a group and training the LIT’s to lead groups. Once the time period is over all LIT’s lead a new group. They can do this by pairing with another LIT from the Turbo Group or by finding their own LIT.
CSLPS Leadership Training Class Agenda

Below is the outline for CSLPS’s 6 week leadership program. The Bodhi Center used the information presented at the Meta Model seminar/conference and an Enneagram facilitator to support that part of the program. The 6 weeks ended with an invitation into Leadership (if not already serving).

**Week 1: Letting go of old beliefs about you and leadership. Co-creating new ideas.**
- Welcome/check in
- Why are we here? What is the purpose of this class?
- Learning about leadership at CSLPS and leading a group at CSLPS.
- What is their historic and present relationship with leadership?
- What is leadership vs. spiritual leadership?
- Identifying and letting go of old beliefs.

**Week 2: What is your relationship to belonging?**
- What is group life at CSLPS: Home Groups, Teams, and Ministries?
- What is a small group?
- LLDD and Spiritual Practice
- What is the role of the leader?
- Job Profile of a group leader at CSLPS.
- Prayer
- Visioning: Awakening to the leader within.
- Introduce styles (Enneagram) and ask people to learn their type

**Week 3: What is your relationship to support and being outrageously supported?**
- How does the leader get outrageously supported?
- Are you open to being outrageously supported?
- Leader Champion / Director
- Show Care Structure
- What is “Ignite!”?

**Week 4: What is your relationship to invitation?**
- Growing a Group
- The Open chair
- The Leader in Training
- Birthing
- Circle of invitation in the room: experience of what it was like to be invited and not; to invite and not.

**Week 5: Enneagram**
- Handling the messiness of group life
- Conflict
- EGRs
- People not coming
- Your Enneagram in leadership
- Blind spots, reactivity, essence qualities as a leader

**Week 6: Re-cap**
- Group Quiz
- Invitation to leadership?
- Where can someone step into leadership now?
- Blessing
- Commitment
Loving Activities (aka Spiritual Ice Breakers)

The purpose of the loving activities is to invite sharing of each individual within the group. Through the sharing, intimacy immediately begins to take place. Comfort and trust builds and bonds form, allowing the small group to give the gift it brings…connection

**Truth, Truth, Lie**
- Each member takes a turn sharing 2 truths about themselves and 1 lie, the rest of the group attempts to guess which of the 3 is a lie (this leads to wonderful story telling)

**Getting into the “Vortex” (or ABC’s of Spirituality)**
- A simple word game that brings the group into what Abraham-Hicks calls the vortex, a consciousness of ease, grace and interconnectedness. Have the group sit in a circle. Go around the circle having each person speak a word that represents God. You must follow the alphabet and go from A-Z. Example: Person 1 – Abundance. Person 2 – Beauty. Person 3 – Creativity, etc. Continue to go round and round the circle until the last person comes up with one for Z.
- If you want to be really creative, and have the time, you can reverse it and go from Z-A telling them they cannot repeat one that has already been spoken.
- Encourage the group to not give advice, but instead allow the individual to come up with a word on their own.

**1 Fun Childhood Story & 1 Gratitude Sharing**
- Go around the circle twice, on the first pass have everyone share a fun story of their childhood, the second time around have each member share gratitude for where God is expressing with ease and grace in their life (i.e. my relationship with parents – loving communication, work – in the ‘zone’ and joyful with boss and colleagues, personal practice – it has been so easy to wake up a little early this week and meditate for 5 minutes every day) etc.

**Blah, Blah, Blah – Love, Love, Love**
- This works best to break up into groups of 3 to 4 but could be done in a larger group too.
- One person is to share what they would like prayer for, however, the only word they can use is “blah” (really invite the individuals to let it go, feel their prayer request, no one will know the details, but tapping into the feeling behind the request is important). Allow them to share for a couple of minutes.
- Next the rest of the group/circle all says their individual prayer response out loud for the person requesting prayer all at the same time, but the only word that can be used is “love” (the person requesting the prayer literally gets bathed in prayers of love).

**2 Minute Check-In**
- Go around the circle and let each member do a simple quick check-in on how they are doing. (to introduce this sharing/ice breaker try using a 2 minute timer (obviously you can adjust the time however you wish) so everyone can feel what 2 minutes is like)

**Share what brought them to this Center/group**
- Great for new groups, but never a bad exercise to use. Each member shares their story of how they came to attending this Center/group.
Share why they are in the given group

- Another great activity for new groups, each member speaks to why their heart was pulled to participate in the particular team/ministry/home group.

Sing favorite songs from service

- The power of signing can never be understated or estimated. No one needs to play an instrument (ah, but what if you find out someone plays guitar, can they bring it to the next meeting?). Simply invite someone to start a song, or better yet have the leader start on and ask everyone to join in.

Raise & Praise

- This is a great activity to sprinkle anywhere in a meeting, beginning middle or end.
- One person starts and turns to the person on their left and says, “Thomas, I raise and praise you for the magnificent expression of joy that you are,” Thomas turns to the person on his left, “Sheila, I raise and praise you as the perfect expression of peace that you are!” Sheila turns to her left and this continues around the circle until everyone has raised and praised someone as the expression of some God quality.
- Once you have gone around the circle, change directions if you’d like and go around to your right.

Rampage of Appreciation

- All the members put their names on small pieces of folded paper in a bowl/
- A group member starts by drawing a name from the bowl. He/she then has to speak one word or a short phrase of appreciation for that person. Then the person on his/her right speaks a word or phrase of appreciation, then the next person, etc, until it goes all the way around the Circle. (The idea is to keep it going quickly)
- Then the person who was just appreciated draws a name from the bowl, speaks a word or short phrase of appreciation, followed by the person on their left, until the appreciation goes all the way around the Circle. The person who was last appreciated draws the next name, until everyone in the Circle has been appreciated.

Future Pull

- Count off by 4’s. Have all four members sit facing one another. Ask them to decide who goes first. NOTE: you can do it in groups of 3, but 4 creates a more positive and interactive energy.
- The first person shares about something he’d like to create in his life.
- Then he turns his chair around so that his back is to the other three, and the three of them have a conversation from the point of view that this is already accomplished. (“It’s so great that John is loving his new job as a kindergaten teacher. Every morning he’s up before the alarm rings, ready to get to school. And this job is so perfect for him, because he has the summer off to do his painting.”)
- After 1:30 – 2 minutes of “future pull” conversation, the Leader asks the members to switch, and another member shares his/her desire to create something, then turns his/her back, and the others do a future pull for him/her around that desire. Repeat for the rest of the group members.
Prayer Cards

“This is one of my favorite ways to keep Spirit alive and your meeting prayed up from beginning to end.” – Mark Anthony Lord

Before your meeting:
- Acquire 3x5 note cards, or simply cut paper into that size
- Write in the middle of each “prayer card”
- Make as many cards as their will be people at the meeting
- At the beginning of the meeting give each person a card

Objective:
- Each person must play their “prayer card” at sometime during the meeting whenever the Spirit moves them. They do not have to necessarily wait for a challenging moment, although that is the best time to play the prayer card. Anyone can play their card at will.
- By the end of the meeting all prayer cards need to be played.
- If the movement to play prayer cards is slow, keep gently reminding them to play.

Who prays?
You can do this three ways:
1. If every person in your meeting is confident praying out loud, have the person who plays the card do the prayer.
2. If there are people at the meeting who do not yet know how to do spiritual mind treatments or are nervous to do so out loud, assure them they do not have to. Each time a card is played... anyone can pray!
3. Write out a short prayer/affirmation on the back of the card that could be read or provide a page of written prayers prepared by your Practitioners.
Dedicate Yourself To Radical Selfishness

rad∙i∙cal, adj.: existing inherently in a thing or person
self∙ish∙ness, n.; devoted to and caring deeply for the well-being of self

1. Create a new relationship with selfishness...it’s a good thing!
Answer to the callings of your heart and mind before you answer to the callings of the tribe. Accept that a reasonable and responsible level of selfishness builds long-term benefits for everyone you care about.

2. Know what you want and say “No”
When you have clearly communicated who you are and what you want, people can relax. Being direct may turn some folks off. But usually those are insecure, vague, indecisive people who—until they become more self-secure—are likely to waste big chunks of your time. If you have a hard time saying no, this boundary energy that can pay off dividends for a lifetime.

3. Selfishness is usually the first step to getting your needs met and building a reserve.
Very few people experience having all they need is all areas – time, money, space, opportunities, network, love. Reserves are a key to becoming irresistibly attractive and will build no-strings attached generosity.

4. When you become truly selfish, you’ll have the extra reserve needed to really care about and be generous with others
Building yourself a solid base will give you the power to be generous. When “your cup runs over” you have extra resources that others can freely take advantage of without any risk to you.

5. Stop hanging around folks who abhor selfishness
People who build their identity on trying to “do good” all of the time or who try to ‘evolve’ beyond their ‘ego’ are usually drainers. Why? Because it takes a lot of ego to pretend you’re above having an ego- and a lot of energy to keep up that kind of pretense. Guess who that energy is going to come from? The people they are ‘serving’?

6. Give your gifts room to develop
Gifts and talents are rare, wonderful and valuable. Your gifts deserve nourishment in order to fully blossom. Be a good servant of your gifts. Create a setting in which they can flourish, so both you and other people can enjoy, benefit, and profit from them.

7. Take what you feel you need, even if it seems that others won’t get as much
When you treat yourself to whatever you’d want to give the person you love most, others in your life will adapt and even be glad. Win/win solutions will start popping up everywhere when everyone is definite and totally clear about what they want.
Practice Extreme Self-Care/Selfishness

1. Environment and Family – nurturing, organized and well maintained home, ‘tribe’ that adds energy to your life, back up your computer plenty of time in nature.

2. Physical and Emotional Well-being – exercise, good eating habits, physical exams, bodywork, excellent posture, adrenaline free behavior, plenty of touch, conscious breathing, live in the present, get to the source of emotional reactions.

3. Career – work in your genius, work only with co-workers and clients you enjoy, get paid well for your value.

4. Support and Experts – connection to Divine Force, mentors, create a professional team of experts you can call upon anytime for support.

5. Appearance-clothes you love, hair style as you want, well maintained nails, teeth and skin.

6. Sustainability-restructured finances (cut expenses, increase income) so you have no financial concerns and money does not drive your decisions, heal from past emotional wounds so past does not guide you, eliminate stresses in your life.

7. Daily Rituals- deliberate and nourishing wake-up routine, stretch, floss, under promise consistently, plenty of alone time, stay in touch with your feelings, days are spent doing what YOU want not what you should do or others expect of you, relaxing bedtime routine, so you fall asleep happy.

8. Pleasure-what makes you feel great? (whimsical, intellectual, entertainment, physical and sexual)

How you know you’re making progress:

- You’re able to put yourself first
- You may find that you need less from others
- You attract others who already know how to be selfish
- You feel more independent, less ‘pulled’ by your roles
- You find yourself being more generous, because you can afford to be
- You get a lot more of what you want, more often
- You embrace the notion that ‘if it’s good for me, it’s probably going to benefit others’
Book / Online Resources List:

**Prepare Your Church for the Future** [Paperback] Carl F. George

**How to Break Growth Barriers** Carl F. George

**The Big Leap: Conquer Your Hidden Fear and Take Life to the Next Level** Gay Hendricks

**The Emerging Church: A Model for Change and a Map for Renewal** Bruce Sanguin

**Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don’t** Jim Collins

**Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate: A New Vision for Financial Stewardship** J. Clif Christopher

**Fusion: Turning First-Time Guests into Fully-Engaged Members of Your Church** Nelson Searcy, Jennifer Henson

**Growing an Engaged Church: How to Stop ‘Doing Church’ and Start Being the Church Again** Albert L. Winseman, D. Min.

**Living Your Strengths: Discover Your God-Given Talents and Inspire Your Community** Albert L. Winseman D. Min., Donald O. Clifton, Curt Liesveld, M. Div.

**The Three Laws of Performance: Rewriting the Future of Your Organization and Your Life** (J-B Warren Bennis Series) Steve Zaffron, Dave Logan

**Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership** Joseph Jaworski, Peter M. Senge

**Presence** Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, and Betty Ann Flowers

**How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation** Robert Kegan, Lisa Lahey

**Words Can Change Your Brain: 12 Strategies to Build Trust Resolve Conflict, and Increase Intimacy** Andrew Newberg, M. D. and Mark Robert Waldman

**Online Resources:**

**Holacracy** by Brian Robertson [http://www.holacracy.org/support-tools](http://www.holacracy.org/support-tools)


**Governance Model**

What is a Home Group?

A CSLPS Home Group is a small (approximately 8 to 12 member), intimate group that meets monthly in one another’s home. Each home group has a Leader and an Apprentice Leader who provide guidance at the meetings and spiritual care for each of the group members. The home group is dedicated to recognizing honoring and celebrating God, the Love intelligence within all life. We awaken through practice of prayer, meditation. Study and revelation to our spiritual Truth; that we are one with God. Together we strive to embody this, not only as a theory but as a way of being in our community and in our everyday lives. Embracing the qualities of Oneness, Diversity and Harmony, and with a complete dependence on unconditional Love as our guiding power, we hold the space for creativity, speaking truth with integrity, deep witnessing, and celebration of the manifestation of Spirit.

The intention of our Home Groups includes:
- Sharing authentic, meaningful conversation
- Creation of deep connection to each other
- Consistent, active participation in the Circle
- Active ministry to each other and services to the larger community
- Deepening spiritual practice
- Learning from each other and study of New Thought/Ancient Wisdom teachings
- Joy and laughter
A Typical Home Group Meeting

7:00 – 8:00: People arrive and share refreshments
- Please clean up the food before starting the circle. We ask that there be no food during the sharing so that the focus is on the conversation.

8:00 – 9:15: Home Group
- Welcome and Spiritual Practice- Brief meditation, followed by the Invocation, a prayer in the RUBA format, (Recognition, Unification, Blessing, And So It Is).
- Candle ritual-Members light individual candles from a single candle, and claim an intention of quality of God for the evening. (“My name is Don and my intention for this evening is Peace). 
- Circle Agreements (see next page) Members pass around the agreements, each reading one.
- Checking in-Going around the circle once and giving each member a chance to say hello and do a brief sharing of what’s on their mind at the moment.
- Introduction of theme of the month- May include a reading and brief meditation on the theme or even watching a video or listening to an audio presentation relating the theme. Leaders are provided with support materials on these themes from the Home Group Coordination Team.
- Discussion- A time to speak from the heart listen deeply, think creatively, and express authentically.
- The Last Round- A last round of ‘summing up’ what came out of the discussion, maybe on a more personal level. Possibly also another chance for members to share anything important they feel they need to talk about.

9:15 – 9:30: Plans for the Next Meeting
- Date, Time, Location and any other announcements
- Prayer Requests- A volunteer records any prayer requests from other members, and sends the list by Email to the group.
- Closing Prayer-In the RUTHA format (Recognition, Unification, Thanksgiving, And So It Is).
Home Group Agreement

We enter this Sacred Circle with commitment to hold the space for creativity, speak the truth with integrity, witness deeply, and celebrate the manifestation of Spirit. We are reminded that matters which might require extensive personal support can be discussed privately with the Home Group Leader of a CSLPS Spiritual Center Practitioner who might be able to offer additional resources beyond the scope of the Home Group.

With the intention to connect deeply, and to create true community in this Circle, we re-affirm the following agreements:

- We honor the circle as a sacred time and space, in part through consistent, punctual attendance.
- We listen with full attention and compassion.
- We treat what is said in the circle with respect and confidentiality.
- We speak our truth from the heart and from our personal experience.
- We refrain from interrupting, giving advice and from cross-talk. (Challenging or contradicting someone else’s statements, pursuing a line of questioning, etc.)
- We value the unique gift of each member, mindfully allowing time for all to participate. We take responsibility for creating an atmosphere of trust, compassion and openness.
- We appreciate that we are each a vital part of the greater whole we are co-creating.

In addition, we cultivate ongoing relationships with the people in this group, and carry the intentions of the Circle into our daily lives through caring, sharing, celebration, play, service, and prayer.
Attendance Guidelines for Home Groups

Consistent attendance is a significant part of the Home Group dynamic. This small group creates a sacred container which supports us in our spiritual practice, and in going deeper in our relationships with each other. When the same people show up to do spiritual practice together, listen, and share with one another on a regular basis, the consciousness of the entire group grows and deepens. Our Home Group is dedicated to co-creating this experience for our members by agreeing to the following attendance guidelines.

Grace Home Group meets from 7PM until 9:30 PM on the third Friday evening of each month, unless there is a holiday or CSLPS special event conflicts with that date. For the 2009/2010 season, Grace Circles will meet on October 16, November 20, December 18, January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16 and August 20. Cheri, Ted, or Mark will send out a reminder about the monthly meeting one week in advance, including logistic information about the location.

Grace Circle Members make their best efforts to hold this time and space as our sacred commitment to one another. If a schedule conflict arises due to travel, business, or emergency, a member agrees to notify the leader as soon as he/she is aware of it.

If a member has missed three or more Circles during the 2009/2010 season, Cheri will check in with him/her and ask whether participation in Grace Home Group is still an important part of her/his life in spiritual community.

I agree to these guidelines for Grace Home Group.

NAME ___________________________ DATE ______________________________
Building a Home Group by Affinity

A Guide for CSLPS Home Group Leaders
An opportunity to Co-Create and Connect!

Your Vision, Your Affinity, Your Ministry
Creating a Home Group by the process of Affinity is a special leadership opportunity - a chance to minister to a group of 10-15 people who have something unique in common, in addition to a strong desire for spiritual connection and community.

Your Home Group may be formed of people, who are neighbors, or people, who have a similar occupation, or people with a strong interest in a certain field of study, or people who have taken a class together. Your Home Group might be a group of artist, or a group of single parents, or a group of people with a particular sexual orientation, or a group of people who enjoy yoga, or a group of people who like riding motorcycles. No matter what the shared Affinity is, the members if your group have something else in common: they’re seeking an intimate experience of spiritual community. And you, as a Spirit-centered Leader, are co-creating a space for that connection and community to emerge.

Like all activities of CSLPS, your Home Group will be birthed by a process of Visioning. A Visioning process for Home Groups was begun in the second year of the Bodhi Spiritual Center’s existence and that Vision has unfolded in many ways over the years since then. Visioning has been part of CSLPS since 2006 and has also unfolded in many ways since its initiation. Now your vision and creative process is activated in creating a new Circle based on an Affinity that is speaking to you. You’ll begin by Visioning for your own Circle, guided by your Leader Champion.

Your Leader Champion (LC)
Every small group leader at CSLPS is supported by a Leader Champion (LC). Your LC offers a broad range of support, which includes prayer, Visioning, listening, coaching, and communication of critical information for Home Group Central and the CSLPS staff. Your LC will connect with you around once a week, to offer you prayer support and see how things are going in your Circle and in your life. Your LC is a resource that’s available to you whenever you have a question or need as a CSLPS Leader.

Visioning for Your Circle
Before your Home Group ever starts meeting- possibly even before you have an idea of who your Apprentice Leader might be, you’ll begin the process of birthing your Circle by Visioning. Your Leader Champion (LC) will meet with you (and your apprentice leader if you already have that person in place), to support you in Visioning for your Circle.

What is Visioning? It’s simply becoming a space of deep listening, available to hear Spirit’s highest vision or idea. It’s a process by which we can hear, feel, see, and catch God’s plan for us and our Home Group.

Is Visioning different from visualization? Yes, visualization is mentally seeing the things that we wish to have or to do. Visioning is ‘catching’ God’s idea for us and our Circle. We’re not telling God what we want. We’re sensing into a Divine idea for us and our Home Group. We’re opening the way for that which is unlimited to come into view- into our experience of life.
Visioning Questions
Some of the questions you and your LC might take into the Visioning process are:

- What is Spirit’s highest purpose for this Home Group?
- What qualities of God are revealed in this Home Group?
- What are the special qualities of this ‘affinity’ that group members share?
- What is the perfect timing for the birthing of this Home Group?
- What qualities of God does my Apprentice Leader embody?
- Who are the members of this Home Group?
- How am I called to minister to the people in my Home Group?
- What must I release to fulfill this vision?
- Is there anything else that Spirit wishes to reveal at this time?

Your Apprentice Leader
Your Apprentice leader is not only the person who will share the process of creating your Home Group and ministering to its members...he/she is actively learning the process of Spirit-centered leadership firsthand. You are both a model and a mentor for your Apprentice.

Finding Your Apprentice...
Your perfect Apprentice is already on the way, attracted to your group by the Visioning work you’ve done. It’s possible that someone immediately came to mind in your Visioning process—a face or a name suggested itself, and you know that he/she is someone you’d like to ask to join you in the process of creating your Circle. Someone may even have approached you already. It may be that someone else will help you identify your perfect Apprentice. Be open to all these ideas. The important thing is to choose an Apprentice who is a reflection of those God qualities that were revealed in your Visioning process for your Circle. In addition, your perfect Apprentice is eager to learn, has some natural leadership qualities, is willing to share leadership responsibilities, and has the time to take on a small group ministry. And you feel a connection with your Apprentice—this is someone who you anticipate will be a pleasure for you to work with.

If your perfect Apprentice has not yet presented himself/herself to you, it’s great to ask for help/ Home Group Central is in active conversation with the ministers and teachers at the Center, and can often help identify emerging leaders who might be the perfect fit for your new Circle. We’re also available to support you in prayer in your process of identifying your perfect Apprentice and group members.

Once you have a strong sense of who your Apprentice is, ask him/her to meet in person, if possible, and share your vision for your Home Group. Explain that Home Group leadership is more than simply running a good monthly meeting— it’s actively caring for the 10 or so members of your small group. It’s making a commitment to a weekly prayer partnership with you, and holding in consciousness all the members of your group. It’s seeing what you’re creating together as a ministry to the group members, rather than simply a monthly activity outside the monthly, meeting— a personal call to offer prayer or simply check in. Home Group leadership is primarily about attending to the spiritual well-being of your Circle members.

Now it’s time for you, your LC and your Apprentice to vision together for your Circle. Make time to meet with one another, and go through the Visioning process using the questions on the previous page, possibly supplemented by those that you create yourself that will focus your vision for your Circle. In fact, it’s great to include spiritual practice in all your meetings with your Apprentice— pray in, then briefly Vision or meditate together before you address the ‘doing’ aspects of your meeting. Since the purpose of your Circle is to offer spiritual care to its members— a ministry to one another— begin to fulfill this purpose in your relationship with your Apprentice.
The Members of Your Home Group

It’s important to remember that Spirit has an organic way of connecting people to one another, and that your Home Group is already a perfect idea in the mind of God. People find one another and groups and communities formed in a variety of ways in the world, and that’s true of our Home Groups as well.

In past years, Home Groups were created by a ding-up process, roughly based on neighborhood zip codes. While a few of the Circles that were created in this way were able to thrive and grow, many did not. From studying other spiritual communities, as well as our experience at Bodhi since the Fall of 2009, we’ve learned that building Circles through personal invitation is the strongest predictor of a lasting, thriving, fulfilling Home Group. When someone feels a bond with a leader or another member of a group, they’re more likely to attend meetings regularly, and participate fully.

When you think about the Affinity that you’re desiring to create a Home Group around, think of which people at CSLPS might share that Affinity. Think of who at CSLPS you really enjoy being with, and who you feel a natural connection with. You and your Apprentice and LC can be in conversation around this together. Begin with a list of people, then begin to invite them personally. Call them or speak to them in person and let them know you’re forming a Home Group, and would love to have them as part of the group. Email is a pretty low-vibration form of communication - great for managing logistics but a little weak for building your Circle. A personal conversation sets the tone for what’s to come.

Once your group has begun meeting, you and your LC’s will continue to facilitate an organic growth process through the Open Chair. At every Home Group meeting, you literally place an empty chair in the Circle, holding the place for group growth. Be in conversation with your group about people they know who might be a good fit with your group. You and your LC’s, with the input of your Circle members can discuss at what intervals you might add new group members, and what the process for this might be. Usually it had involved inviting someone to visit the group and sample a Home Group evening, then following up with them to see if joining your Circle feels like a good fit.

In addition to the people you know, Home Group Central will help you connect to others. We will be holding Open Home Group Events quarterly to help identify people who are interested in being in Home Groups and offer them a sample experience of a Home Group evening. You may be asked to participate in one of these evenings as a Leader, and you may discover that people who share your Affinity have made their way to the Open Sangha on the perfect night to connect with you.

There are also times when members may be referred to you by Home Group Central or other CSLPS Leaders. If you’d like to reach out beyond the people you know personally and the people you meet at the Open Home Group Event, feel free to ask your LC or Home Group Central for help/ There are often people who are newer to the Center who have been asking about Home Groups - we can help you find them.

Spirit has brilliant ways of connecting us with one another, Be open to what shows up in your Visioning process, and who shows up in your CSLPS classes and events.
A Final Word

The process of leading and caring for a Home Group is life-expanding. Your work will transform the people who are members of your Circle, and it will transform you as well.

Building Home Groups by Affinity is an organic process, and it’s also an intentional process. It requires attentiveness, patience, sensitivity, and faith. The Circles that have been birthed in this way have a life of their own. Because they were allowed to develop and grow consciously, then have deep roots and can sustain themselves at times when group members are very busy or are experiencing life challenges. The depth of connection that’s built from the spiritual consciousness of the Home Group Leader, Apprentice, and LC becomes a solid foundation for the group to grow in their capacity to care for one another as well as expanding Circle membership and birthing new Circles. It’s important to trust that your Circle will be birthed at the perfect time, with the perfect apprentice, caring for the perfect group members. It’s important to trust that you and your Circle will be supported by an LC who will be the perfect resource to support you in your work as a Leader. But most of all, it’s important to prioritize your own spiritual practice and the development of your consciousness of Spirit-centered Leadership.

Here are some beautiful words from *The Tao of Leadership* by John Heider, that describe the foundation of consciousness on which your Home Group Leadership rests.

#15 The Leader’s Teachers

- They practiced meditation. Meditation made them good at seeing how things happened. Meditation grounded them in the infinite. That is why they sometimes appeared deep and inscrutable, sometimes even great.
- Their leadership did not rest on technique or theatrics, but on silence and their ability to pay attention.
- They moved with grace and awareness, and they were able to negotiate complex situations safely.
- They were considerate. They did no injury. They were courteous and quiet, like guests. They knew how to yield gracefully and how to be natural and inconspicuous.
- They were as open and receptive and available as the valleys that among the hills.
- They could clarify events for others, because they had done it for themselves.
- They could speak to the depths of another person, because they had known their own deeper conflicts and blocks.
- Because they had given up selfishness, they could enhance others.
- They were not trying to become enlightened, because they were enlightened.
Growing Your Home Group: The Organic Way

Is growth a good thing?
Your Home Group may be fairly new, or you may have been meeting together for a while—some of the Bodhi Home Groups have been together for more than four years. The long-established Home Groups have experienced natural cycles of growth, as members have formed new relationships and invited friends and partners into the Home Group, or transitioned pit of a group because of a move from the area or other life changes. Spirit has an organic way of connecting people with one another, and we’ve already seen that at work.

You may find that when you think about the idea of encouraging conscious, organic growth in your Home Group, some anxious thoughts come to mind—“Will growth diminish the feeling of intimacy in our Home Group? Weaken the bond that we’ve established over-time? Increase the time commitment for me as a Home Group Leader, and my Apprentice Leader?” Looking at growth for our community overall, this same anxious voice might ask, “What if CSLPS gets too big? Will I feel less connected?”

It’s fascinating to study the way the small group model has worked in other spiritual communities. All previous experience points to the fact that small groups actually remain healthy and functional as they grow. Rather than being a threat to intimacy, growth prevents stagnation and offers an expanded consciousness to everyone—including the members who have been part of the same group for years. Three important keys to a thriving group are:

1. A spirit of inclusiveness—welcoming new members
2. Taking on some service activity outside the group
3. Growing organically and eventually birthing new groups

These keys keep the group from growing inwardly focused, the kind of environment that can contribute to friction between members, or dwindling enthusiasm about the group process. Conscious expansion actually increases group intimacy! Who’d a thunk it?

The idea of growing the entire CSLPS community through small group model had extraordinary benefits. Besides the expansion of consciousness, carrying a positive, healing presence in our community, growth gives us the opportunity to share the responsibilities of financial support and volunteer service activities among a broader base. As we look for a new physical home, and expand the programming and care our community offers, having many hands to contribute to the process makes the load lighter for everyone. It also offers many people the joy and inspiration of co-creating something really special.

Small groups that grow organically have the joy of giving birth to other small groups. Ultimately, a group that expands and births a new group gives its members a chance to know 20-30 people in an intimate, authentic way. This good keeps multiplying as the new groups that are birthed expand and give birth as well. And all of this happens organically, consciously, slowly. Leaders and group members always have a choice about the timing of growth and birthing processes—nothing is engineered by some authority outside the group. Growth happens at the right time, in the right way, for each group.

So, how are we doing this?
In past years, Home Groups were created by a sign-up process, roughly based on neighborhood zip codes. While a few of the Circles that were created in this way were able to thrive and grow, many did not. From studying other spiritual communities, as well as our experience at CSLPS and Bodhi, we’ve learned that building Home Group through personal invitation from a Leader is the strongest predictor of a lasting, thriving, fulfilling Home Group. When someone feels a bond with a leader or another member of a group, they’re more likely to attend meetings regularly, and participate fully.
A wonderful way to create a conscious intention for organic growth in your Home Group is the **Open Chair**. At every Home Group meeting, you literally place an empty chair in the Home Group. Holding the place for group growth. Be in conversation with your group about people they know who might be a good fit with your group. You and your LC’s, with the input of your Circle members, can discuss at what intervals you might add new group member and what the process for this might be, Often it involves a Leader or group member suggesting a friend, either from CSLPS or outside of CSLPS, who they’d like to invite to visit the Home Group. Once the friend has visited the group and experienced a Home Group, you follow up with them to see if joining your Circle feels like a good fit.

When you’re thinking about adding a new member to your group, think of who you really enjoy being with— who you feel a natural connection with. If your Home Group has a particular Affinity, such as the Couple Home Group, the Sisterhood Home Group, the Artists Home Group, or one of the neighborhood Home Groups, think of who at the Center shares that Affinity. Present the Open Chair at the beginning of your Home Group gathering, explaining why it’s there, then at the end of the Home Group, ask your group members this question: “Is there someone you know who you’d like to see filling our Open Chair?”

Honoring the process that you, your LC, and your group have created around including new members, you can then contact the prospective new member and **invite them personally**. Call them or speak to them in person and let them know you would love to have them visit your Circle and see if it’s a group they’d like to join. Email is a pretty low-vibration form of communication—great for managing logistics but weak for building your Circle. A personal conversation sets the tone for what’s to come.

In addition to the people you know, Home Group Central will help you connect to others. We will be holding **Open Home Group Events** quarterly to help identify people who are interested in being in Home Groups and offer them a sample experience of a Home Group evening. You may be invited to participate in one of these evenings as a Leader, and you may discover that people who share your Affinity have made their way to the Open Home Group on the perfect night to connect with you.

There are also times when members may be referred to you by the Home Groups Central or other CSLPS Leaders. If you’d like to reach out beyond the people you know personally and the people you meet at the Open Home Group Event, feel free to ask you LC or Home Group Central for help. There are often people who are newer to the Center who have been asking about Home Groups—we can help you find them.

**What’s next?**

Once a group begins to expand beyond the capacity of its meeting space, it’s usually time to consider birthing a new group from the original group. This is typically when a group reaches 15-18 regularly attending members. We’ll follow up with you and your LC and offer you information about the process of birthing a group a little later on, but for now, we’d like to offer that a wonderful way of preparing for this process in the interim phase is for the Leader and the Apprentice to lead two smaller discussion groups in the same home on the same meeting night. So if you find yourself with a Home Group of 12-18 people attending one evening, you might like to try doing the opening meditation, candle ritual and check-ins as one large group, and doing the discussion in two groups, one lead by the Leader, and the other by the Apprentice. It’s also a great way of giving the Apprentice some experience in facilitating the discussion.

**In conclusion...**

Spirit has brilliant ways of connecting us with one another. Be open to what shows up in your Visioning process, and who shows up in your CSLPS classes and events. Be open and allowing and stay in the flow of creativity, and watch the beauty of expansion take place in the community—expansion that’s brought about by the deep roots of conscious growth.
Facilitating Home Group Check In’s & Discussions

If there are members who haven’t been at a Circle in a while, or during the early months of forming a Circle, or if there are newer members to the Circle, it may be that the check-ins take up a longer percentage of the meeting than the discussion time. THIS IS OKAY! The Leader learns to sense what is most useful for the group, and at certain stages of group life, it may be that the members simply need to check in to know one another better, and deepen in their experience of community. It’s perfectly fine to have a larger part of the meeting devoted to check-ins, or in some cases to put the discussion topic aside for that month. This is absolutely fine from time to time. It’s important, however, that it not be the Home Group experience month after month. Members can also deepen in intimacy through discussing the monthly topics.

Facilitating the discussion portion of the meeting is also a fluid, sensitive process.
The goal of Home Group discussions is to allow the group to carry on a deep conversation. The Leader may use the monthly curriculum as a guide for the discussion, adapting it as is useful for the group life. Some Leaders begin the discussion with a question or exercise from the discussion guide and simply facilitate what the group creates from that. Mature groups can often create an entire evening’s discussion with one question from the Leader as a starting point. Other groups need a little more coaching from the Leader, and he or she may use all the materials sent out with the curriculum.

Home Group discussions are different from classes. The goal is not to get through all the material, with the Leader acting as teacher. The goal is to facilitate the group’s exploration of the topic and deepening of their relationships with one another through discussion. Home Group Leaders lead discussions by invitation. It’s as though they’ve put a pie on the table for the group to share. People are comfortable with different size slices, so it’s okay if some members respond more to certain topics than others. Some members will be tired or under the weather at some Home Group meetings. While it’s important to safeguard everyone’s participation by making sure that one person not take half of the pie, and it’s also important to invite everyone to share the pie, it’s not necessary to insist on people taking more than they’re comfortable taking.

Think of the conversation as happening out in the middle of the Circle, with the Leader initiating the topic and the group carrying on from there. To continue with the pie analogy, invite people to have a piece of pie, but let them serve themselves. Another analogy is the idea of a wheel. As a Home Group Leader, it’s important that we don’t see ourselves as the center hub of the wheel, with all spokes leading to us. We don’t manage the discussion, we facilitate it. We invite and allow, rather than direct. We can stimulate discussion by asking questions to the group from the curriculum, but we’re not acting as teachers who are interested in getting a particular answer from the group, or covering a certain amount of material.

One way to ‘take the temperature’ of your Home Group discussion leadership is to notice people’s eye contact as they’re sharing. Does everyone look to you as the Leader when they’re sharing, addressing their comments to you? Or do people look around the whole group and share with everyone? What happens after someone comments? Do people feel comfortable commenting right away, or are they looking to you for direction after every comment? You may have set up a type of Leadership where the group feels as though you’re the authority. Try to keep your focus in the middle of the room- visualize that the discussion is happening there. When someone has just commented, if everyone is looking at you, rather than move to the next question in the discussion guide, ask questions like, ‘Does anybody have anything more to say about that?’ ‘What do you think about what she just said?’ ‘Did anybody have any thoughts or feelings about what he said?’ The goal is a discussion where everyone takes responsibility for participating and co-creating, and the Leader gently and gracefully tends or re-directs the discussion.
The group dynamic develops over time, and changes as new members enter the group and other members leave. Every Home Group discussion is its own experience of community, co-created by whoever is there at that meeting. Every Home Group discussion also shapes the maturity of the group. Even if there are only four members present on a particular evening, the consciousness of the group, the group field, is deepened by that discussion. In fact, sometimes the discussions that are have when fewer members are present actually go the deepest, and pave the way for greater group intimacy when other members return. When newcomers attend a Home Group, they instantly ‘get’ the group vibration. A mature group welcoming a new member usually experiences a sense of deepening and awakening as it opens to include the new member.

Be flexible, be attentive, and be willing to put your own agenda aside and allow the group to create what it will be. Our intention as Home Group Leaders is to facilitate and attend to a developing intimate spiritual community, rather than to be architects of a group experience that we design and implement. We’re more like gardeners, tending to growth, than a team leader carrying out a mission, or teachers presenting a curriculum. Our purpose is to create an atmosphere of attentiveness, care, safety, and openness. We lead the spiritual practice, but we facilitate the discussions.

A light touch and flexibility insures an easy, connecting group dynamic. Surrender control of the group and trust that you and your Circle members are the conduits through which Spirit is co-creating your Circle. Your primary relationships, with your D, your LC, your LCA, your Leader your Apprentice, and your group members are absolutely there by divine appointment. If you are in the energy of offering loving attention and care to the people you are working with to create your Home Group, you’re setting the tone for ministry to take place. The beauty of spiritual community is the way we minister to one another. And the beauty of spiritual community is that we recognize that we’re spiritual beings having a human experience.

Our human experience can often be challenging, especially in the areas that require collaboration. If you’re experiencing friction with or resistance to someone in your group or in your leadership support system, be willing to check out what energy is activated in you. Try to look at the circumstances from a spiritual point of view. If we recognize that everyone in our life is in our spiritual care (including other drivers and telemarketers), it changes our relation with circumstances where we feel friction and resentment. Conversation that take place from a place of right-and-wrong or good-and-bad. Can you see the person in your life that is a challenge as someone who is in your spiritual care? You can still speak with them about what isn’t working in your relationship, but the conversation will be held in the energy of connection rather than separation.

Thank You for your willingness to serve in Home Group Leadership. The impact you are having on the people in your spiritual care is a gift and a blessing. The community that we are co-creating is a beautiful thing.